

The magic of Princettia®

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Princettia® is the latest release from Bonza®, and represents a truly amazing breakthrough for lovers of this traditional and popular flowering plant (*Euphorbia spp.*). During 2009 three varieties will be introduced to the Australian market; Bright Pink, Candy Pink and Deep Pink. Each variety has its own unique characteristics, yet they also have similarities in their growth habit and flowering requirements.

Princettia® has been years in the making by renowned plant breeders Bonza Botanicals, which combines the collaborative efforts of Suntory Flowers, Japan and Oasis Horticulture. Bonza Botanicals director Dr Andrew Bernuetz has used the species *E. pulcherrima* and *E. cornastra*, as the basic building blocks to produce these magnificent interspecific hybrids.

Before Princettia® entered the market, pink flowering poinsettia was not a very popular choice for wholesale growers, as the habit and bract

quality of many pink varieties was not very attractive. As a result, retail and consumer support for such types was not strong. This breeding breakthrough is a big win for growers, who can now produce uniform and compact crops without growth regulators, and the



Figure 1: Bright Pink

excellent branching will yield flower counts never before seen.



Figure 2: Candy Pink

At the completion of the Princettia® trials in December 2008, growers were amazed at the compact habit, excellent branching, high bract quality and resulting high flower count. But the real winner was the bract colours.

Across all three

varieties, the bract colours were very clean and striking. Even the variety Candy Pink, with its soft pastel coloured bracts and dark green foliage, was a real standout.

Princettia® was released globally for the first time in January 2009 at the international horticultural trade fair for plants; IPM, located in Essen, Germany, and received strong support from growers and retailers alike. Princettia® will be first offered for sale by Oasis Horticulture as part of its 2009 Mother's Day assortment.

No Longer Just a Christmas Plant

Other specialist growers have also been licensed to produce Princettia® for Christmas, and thereafter. The appeal of Princettia® makes this plant ideal for growing right through the cooler months, and again for Christmas. The year round availability of cuttings will allow growers to market Princettia® outside traditional sales periods.